be resolved in a humane and practical way. Indian fishermen straying into Sri Lankan waters are sometimes apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy and Sri Lankan fishermen's associations. The apprehended fishermen are treated humanely and repatriated quickly with facilitation from our High Commission in Colombo and the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Simplifying procedure for Issue of passports

1271. DR. ABRAR AHMED:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that police verification of applicants is one of the major reasons causing delay in the issuing of passports to them in a stipulated period; and

(b) if so, how Government propose to simplify this procedure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) The Passport authorities are in regular interaction with the State Governments to expedite the Police Verification Reports. Coordination Committee at State level headed by Home Secretary have been constituted to, *inter alia,* ensure expeditious police verifications. The Government have also taken up the issue of expediting the police verification reports at other high levels in State Governments.

Strategic dialogue between India and UAE

1272. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a diplomatic breakthrough, India and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to a framework of strategic dialogue for the first time;

(b) if so, what are the main issues on which both the countries have agreed to help each other;